



Local Community Policing

Housebreaking Alert

In recent weeks Police Scotland have seen an increase of Housebreaking Crimes across the country whereby criminals have gained access to unoccupied properties in search of high value items such as jewellery, cash and small electronic equipment. Also, on some occasions, keys to valuable motor vehicles have been stolen and some of these vehicles have then been used to commit further crimes.

Certain methods have been used to break into properties by isolating vulnerable access points or weakened security.

These include:

- Lock snapping. By simply removing the barrel lock situated close to the door handle. This is often done using plyers or mole grips attached to a protruding barrel lock and forcibly removing it. This isolates the locking mechanism and enables the door to open easily.
- Forcibly prising open UPVC patio doors situated to the rear of the property using a jemmy type tool.
- Breaking glass panels close to door handles and accessing these handles from within.
- Forcing rear situated bedroom windows.

Mitigating action can be taken to reduce the chances of being subject to Housebreaking Crimes.

These include:

- Identifying weak points. A home is only as secure as its weakest point of entry, which is why it is so important to have doors and windows that are as secure as possible. Doorsets – door, frame, locks, fittings and glazing – which allow direct access to your home should achieve the high security standard of the Police Preferred Specification.
- Easily accessible windows, including roof lights and roof windows, should also meet Police Preferred Specification standards.
- Ensure all keys, including car keys, are out of sight and not kept in an obvious location. Remove keys from the inside of locks.
- Store any high value items (i.e. jewellery, cash, passports) in a properly secured safe or bank vault.
- Make your valuables less attractive to thieves by using a property or police recognised forensic marking solution – this includes for valuable tools and equipment that are stored in outbuildings and garages. Clearly advertise your use of such methods with a sign or window stickers.
- Keep ladders and tools stored away, don't leave them outside where they could be used to break into your home.
- Fit laminated glass or film to windows directly adjacent to door/entry points.
- Use CCTV and motion sensor activated LED lighting to monitor activity around your property, paying particular attention to area which are not overlooked in any way.

For further and more detailed home security advice visit www.securedbydesign.com.

Crime Stoppers (anonymous reporting): 0800 555111

Stranraer Community Policing Team

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